Rice to Andhra Pradesh for special SGRY

338. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the quantity of foodgrains given as drought relief to six affected States, so far;

(b) whether Andhra Pradesh has requested for release of more rice to continue works taken up under special Sampoorna Grameena Rozgar Yojana Scheme; and

(c) if so, the decision taken on request of Andhra Pradesh Government for providing a relief of Rs. 174 crore?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) 30.90 lakh MTs. of foodgrains have so far been allocated to 14 drought affected States for relief employment.

(b) 6.15 lakh MTs. of foodgrains have so far been allocated to Andhra Pradesh against 25 lakh MTs. demanded by the State Government.

(c) In addition to release of Central share of Calamity Relief Fund (CRF) for 2002-03 amounting to Rs. 163.77 crore, assistance of Rs. 13.72 crore from National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF) has so far been released to the State for the current drought.

Recommendations of GoM to fight drought

339. SHRI AIMADUDDIN AHMAD KHAN (DURRU):
DR. AKHILESH DAS:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a high level Group of Ministers (GoM) was set up to fight the drought and to create conditions for meeting any future droughts;

(b) if so, the recommendations made by the GoM; and

(c) the steps taken to implement the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) A Task Force on drought

Management headed by the Deputy Prime Minister has been constituted for policy decisions to deal with the current drought in many States.

(b) and (c) The decisions taken by the Task Force include allocation of foodgrains free of cost for relief employment, relaxations in the guidelines for allocations under normal component of Sampoorna Grameen Rozgar Yojana (SGRY) scheme, financial support for running cattle camps and free transportation of water and fodder by the Railways. Major decisions of the Task Force have already been implemented.

Effect of cold and foggy spell on Rabi crop

340. SHRI MANOJ BHATTACHARYA:
SHRI DATTA MEGHE:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the prolonged cold and foggy spell in the Northern parts of the country has hit the standing crops, jeopardizing the prospects of a bumper rabi harvest;

(b) if so, the estimated loss to rabi crops;

(c) the measures adopted/proposed to be adopted to protect crops against the inclement weather;

(d) whether Government have formulated any scheme to provide financial assistance particularly to marginal and poor peasants whose crops have been damaged; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV): (a) and (b) The prolonged cold spell had some adverse impact on rabi crops. However, in order to minimize the damage to crops on account of frost, farmers were advised to go for additional irrigation. The rains in the last week of January, 2003 were timely and had a favourable impact on the rabi crops. However, the production of rabi crops this year is likely to be less than last year due to the moisture stress experienced during the monsoon and post monsoon seasons in many States. According to the second advance estimates of agricultural production, the production of rabi foodgrains in 2002-03 is